

SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS



DOUGLAS
LIBRARY

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
AT KINGSTON

KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

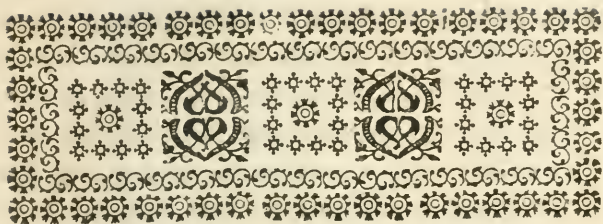
THE
LIMITATION
OF THE
PEERAGE,
THE

Security of the LIBERTIES
of the PEOPLE of *Eng-
land.*



L O N D O N,

Printed for J. ROBERTS in *Warwick-Lane,*
and A. DODD without *Temple-Bar.*
M.DCC.XX. Price 4 d.



T H E
LIMITATION
 O F T H E
P E E R A G E, &c.



F ever there was a Case that deserv'd the utmost Attention of a free Nation, the Case of limiting the Peerage is certainly of the greatest consequence; and as such a one I have in these Papers consider'd it in all its Views, from what has been said for and against it.

I must in the first place own, I thought the Prerogative of making Peers was such a Jewel in the Crown, that no Prince would divest himself of it: And therefore I was struck with the deepest Sense of his Majesty's transcendent Goodness in parting with such a Power for the

Eafe and Safety of his People, which he had seen made use of in the preceding Reign in order to enslave the Nation, and set aside, if possible, his Succession to this Crown; which would have been very dubious, had not the Divine Providence interpos'd, and not given them time to finish their Designs:

I cannot but remember that unhappy Time, when the Power and Numbers were on that side; and that after having experienc'd that the creating Peers by the Dozen gave the Nation no Umbrage, they thought there was nothing they might not attempt.

In the mean time, those that wished well to the Succession as by Law establish'd, lamented that Power in the Crown, when they saw to what use it was put; and I have heard those People say, that after such a Precedent, the Liberties of the People of *England* could never be safe, unless there was some Method found out to limit the Crown in the creating of Peers, who, it was said, were already grown to such a Bulk, as to be a Burden to the Nation. If so, what must be the Consequence of leaving the Door open to their daily increase? This was said at that time, with the greatest Concern, by those that I am satisfied were concern'd for their Country and his Majesty's Succession, which they saw in the utmost Danger from this
Power

Power in the Crown, which if continued to be exerted in such an Arbitrary manner, must reduce things to such a Crisis, that our Liberties must either be given up or disputed.

In the Reign of King *Charles I.* the Dispute began about the Prerogative of the Crown being exerted against the Laws, the Breaches in which first brought on that unhappy Struggle, which tho begun at first only to maintain Liberty, and the just Rights of the People, yet was improv'd afterwards to such a height, that it ended in the Destruction of that Constitution that it was begun to preserve, and introduced the worst of Slaveries. So hard it is in Disputes of such a nature, to keep the Balance even betwixt the Prerogative of the Crown, and the Liberties of the People : for which Side soever gets the better, will improve it to their Advantage; and either way the Nation suffers.

How prudent therefore would it have been to have accepted of his Majesty's most gracious Offers to limit the Number of Peers, and to have secured the Liberties of the People without the least Struggle, and not left it to Futurity, and unforeseen Events ?

Under the happy Influence of a good Prince have the most beneficial Acts been obtained for the Liberties of the People. Those that have
been

been obtained under a bad Reign, have had the misfortune not to be got without a Struggle ; witness *Magna Charta*, and many other Acts obtained.

I would not have it thought that I have any other View than the good of my Country, but that I only contend for our accepting his Majesty's great Indulgence to his People, and not leaving a matter of so great Moment as their Welfare to future Contingencies.

I find the great Cry against the Bill for limiting the Number of Peers, arises from four sorts of People, who have their subsequent Interests and Views that it should not pass.

The first are the professed Jacobites. These as they expect to be rewarded when their turn comes, will never be for limiting that Branch of the Prerogative from whence they expect a reward of Honour due to their Merits.

The second sort are those called *Tories* ; who may also expect a Turn, and may have a View either to the Pretender, or the present Establishment : these must naturally be against shutting the Door ; either way it has Views against their Interest.

The third sort are those whom I can rank under no Denomination, except *Malecontents*, because they are not in the present Administration : these, as they are not also without their Views

of

of having their turn, have most violently opposed this Bill.

The fourth sort are those who having no Merit to recommend them, yet their Fathers having left them vast Estates, they are willing to part with a Quota to be made Peers. But this Bill must be an eternal Bar to all their Hopes: for the Peerage cannot then be lavished as in former Reigns for a Sum of Money, but must be kept for the reward of Merit.

These I own will bear a great weight against the Bill; so true it is that Interest never lyes, and so little is to be expected in this degenerate Age, where tho the Patriot is pretended, and the generality are carried away with that Notion, yet the particular Views and Interests of them who pretend to the most publick Spirit are the Motives.

In the many Papers that have been wrote against the Bill, I never could meet with one solid Objection to prove the dangerous Consequences that might arise from this Limitation of the Peerage; but what are only Chimeras form'd in the Brains of the Writer, and have no Existence any where else.

Is it not time to put a stop to a real Evil? Has not a Practice lately introduc'd made a great step toward the Ruin of the Constitution?

And

And since what has been may be, how can any Man answer it to his Country to refuse what his Majesty offers with such transcendent Goodness for the Safety and Welfare of his People ? Shall we not accept of it for fear of unforeseen Events ? or shall we not, like true *Englishmen*, (while yet it is offer'd) lay aside all particular Views and Regards, and close with the true Interest of the Nation, and secure the Liberties of the People of *England* ?

If People could be divested of all Partiality to themselves, or in respect of their Friends, who fall under the four Heads of the Opposers of this Bill ; I say, if all Self-Interest was laid aside, and the true Patriot taken up, we should be all for this self-denying Bill : And it would be receiv'd with the greatest Thankfulness ; since notwithstanding it was oppos'd, his Majesty still most graciously offers it.

In some Papers that I have seen, there is a mighty regard had, lest the Crown, by this Limitation, should not have Opportunities to reward Merit, and so People be discourag'd from the doing eminent Services for their Country, because of the distant View of Power in the Crown to reward them.

I must own I have contrary Sentiments : I think the Difficulty will render the Honour
more

more coveted ; and it will set up a glorious Emulation for their Country's Service, when the Honour of being a Peer will be the ultimate Reward of great and glorious Actions.

It has been laid down as an Argument, from the general Dislike it gave the Nation, when twelve Peers were made together, that no Minister would attempt the like for the future, and so there was no occasion for this Limitation. But the contrary is Fact : Was not there a Parliament sitting ? Did they not, with the greatest Indolence, sit still and see the Prerogative exerted in such a manner as had no Precedents ? And if it was not justifiable, how came those Guardians of the People's Liberties not to animadvert ? Those who sat still then, are, in great measure, those who oppose the Limiting now ; which surely cannot be thought otherwise than an Approval of what was done.

I find some Papers argue a necessity to keep the Peerage open ; for otherwise wanting fresh Supplies from the Commons, they would be like a stagnant Pool, and grow fetid. The Peers surely are mightily oblig'd to those who make that Objection ; where the inherent Qualities of Spirit and Blood are given up, and a Maxim laid down, that without continual Resources, they would grow a Nuisance to the

B

Nation.

Nation. What then is become of that glorious Pretence of the *English* Nobility, that their high Birth qualified them for the greatest Actions in their Country's Cause? I must own myself to be of the contrary Opinion; and that Men who are born great will be naturally led to what is great and glorious; and that if the Nobility do not shine so bright as their Predecessors, it has been from too great an Enlargement of the Peerage: If this has made them remiss, the Limitation will raise in them again that noble Ardour of serving their Country; and those who then can be added to their Number, will have nothing but their great Abilities in the Service of their Country to recommend them; and the Peerage will no longer be squander'd away for a Sum of Money; which no doubt was the true Ground of a great many Promotions in the late Reign.

I find there is one Paper says, if an Estate is to be sold, it is a very great Addition to the Purchase, that there is not a Lord within ten Miles. I will not pretend to determine the Fact; but taking that for granted, must not every Commoner of *England*, without any respect to the Publick, be for the Limitation of the Peerage, since they are so ill Neighbours? They cannot have the Value of their Estates, nor cannot buy an Estate, with any Security
they

they may not have the Neighbour they would avoid, which a Limitation would prevent: Therefore every Commoner in *England*, unless he comes under my four Denominations, should be for a Limitation, if he will be consistent with himself.

I have seen in some Papers the several Additions made to the House of Commons in former Reigns; when by the Royal Prerogative Boroughs were incorporated, and authoriz'd to send Members to Parliament: Now I could never learn when this Restriction was made, and the Nation declar'd to be fully represented; but I take it for granted, it was done, and a Stop put to the Prerogative, since it has not been exerted since King *Charles I's* time.

Now if it was then thought reasonable to put a stop to the Prerogative in creating of Boroughs to send Members to the House of Commons, why does not the same Reason subsist as to the House of Peers? Is it not a general Complaint, that they are already increased to be a Burden to the Nation? Is it not high time then to accept his Majesty's gracious Concession to limit them? And I have generally found those that argue most strenuously against the Bill, agree, that the Peerage has been too far extended; but still they are against the Li-

mitation, because it hinders theirs and their Friends Views.

Now I would put this Question, Whether the greater or the lesser Number of Peers is like to be most dangerous to the Constitution. It is agreed on all hands, that Interest will be with the Property; if so, the greater the House of Peers grows in number, the greater will be their Property, and consequently the greater their Power and Influence: Therefore how necessary is it to limit them, and to put a stop to their Greatness?

It may be asked if the Peerage be too large already, what reason can there be given why we should have Fifteen added: But that I think is easily answer'd. If his Majesty condescends to part with such an unlimited Prerogative as the creating of Peers, out of his Goodness and Care for the Welfare of his Subjects, can it be reasonably expected that his Majesty should tie up his Hands, so as to have no Reward of Merit? surely this could never be expected. This was never petitioned or asked for; it flowed directly from his Majesty, out of a tender Regard for his Subjects Liberties: since he had seen to what an ill Use this unlimited Branch of the Prerogative had been turned in a late Reign.

In

In my Opinion, it's an Argument not to be answer'd, Why those who are intrusted with the Liberties of the People of *England*, should not with the greatest Gratitude accept the Offer his Majesty makes them in his Speech, where, with a fatherly Tendernefs and Regard for them, he promises the same gracious Favour this Sessions ; and desires them to consider of it. While other Princes, jealous of their Prerogative, are extending it beyond its just Limits ; our gracious Prince gives it up for the Security of his People, notwithstanding the Opposition it meets with. This is an Example not to be met with in History ; and whether accepted or no, will be one of the greatest Glories of his Reign, especially if a time should come that it might be necessary, but not be obtain'd.

I have already consider'd how the Prerogative being extended beyond the just Limits in the Reign of King *Charles* the First, was the occasion of those Miseries that befel this Nation. It was certainly necessary, for the Liberties of the People, that a Stop should be put to those Encroachments. And tho the Parliament then sitting certainly had no other View than to keep the Balance between the Prerogative and the Liberties of the People ; yet when the Sword was once drawn, that very Sword was turn'd
against

against those Liberties it was drawn to protect.

In that Glorious Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, she was as sparing of Honours as some of her Successors were profusive ; so that she left at her Death but fifty nine Peers. Her Reign was forty four Years, almost half an Age ; and never did *England* know a more happy Series : Nor do I find any one Inconvenience happen by her being so parsimonious of Honour. I do not doubt but there were many that thought their Services not rewarded. These Men might complain ; but this did not affect the Nation : For no ill Consequence to the Publick attended it. And if we look into all the Reigns since the Conquest to this Day, we shall find the worst Princes were most generally profuse of Honours, and not one Benefit ever accru'd to the Nation by the increasing of the Peerage ; but I believe it will be found the Publick has suffer'd by it, when that Prerogative has been made use of to serve Turns. And one Instance of this we had in the late Reign, which ought to make every true Patriot tremble.

Now it must be suppos'd that the Crown in all Creations of Peers must have always been in the right, (which I believe is an Argument no one Man will maintain ;) yet this must be done,

to

to support the Necessity of that Prerogative continued in the Crown: That the Crown being always in the right, and the House of Lords in the wrong, it's necessary to leave unconfin'd this Branch of the Prerogative, that such Numbers may be let in to bring^t them to a right understanding.

But supposing the Crown in the wrong, and the House of Lords in the right; is not here a Door left open for the Crown to bring in such Numbers as to carry the point?

Now take it either way, so long as an unlimited Power remains in the Crown of creating Peers, the House of Lords can be nothing but a Tool in the hands of the Crown, to direct as it pleases.

Now can any one shew the Nation ever suffer'd from our Princes voluntarily limiting themselves in making of Peers? And what difference is there in the making that an Act, which before had no ill Influence when voluntary? Did it in any of those Times appear the Power in the Peers was exorbitant, because there were so few Creations? It's true, this Act of Limitation may be a Bar in the way of an ill Prince, but can never hurt a good one.

It may be argued, that the dangerous Consequence of this Bill is, That let those be whatever they will, a Repeal will never pass a
House

House of Lords ; they will never consent to the repealing an Act that limits their Number, and consequently makes the Honour more valuable. Now I think this is answer'd, That no time can shew, that where the Prince voluntarily restrain'd the Peerage, the small Number any ways affected the Constitution, or the Liberties of the People ; nay, on the contrary, in all those Reigns where Princes were least diffusive of this Prerogative, the Nation was more happy. Therefore I am for redressing what has been found a certain Ill, and not frighted with pretended Consequences that are not capable of Demonstration.

Some People argue against this Bill, because it's push'd on by the Ministry, who must certainly have some particular Ends in it ; or else, why must there be fifteen added ? I have in another place taken notice of the Part His Majesty has in this Matter. As to the Ministry, I could have no Notion of their having any hand in it ; or that there could be any Set of Men so self-denying, as to limit the Prerogative, and deprive themselves of a certain Sanctuary in case of an Attack : For the Crown can never want Dependants in the House of Lords, nor the Ministry some Friends, so that a new Creation will be a certain Security to them. And let the Success of this Bill be what it will, it

will

will be an eternal Monument to their Honour, that they had any share either in counselling His Majesty, or endeavouring that it should pass, especially in our present Circumstances, when, by an unfortunate Division among Friends, the least ill Success, or any Disaster from ever so well concerted Measures, will bring such a Torrent against them, as to put them in the utmost Hazard; and since even now they meet with Attacks in every part of their Administration.

In my private Capacity, had my Counsel or Opinion been ask'd, I should have been against the Bill, and have said that they ought to oppose it: But in my publick Capacity, and as a Well-wisher to my Country, divesting my self of all sinister Ends, or partial Views, but acting the true Patriot, I must declare my self for the passing the Bill.

I will for once (since it cannot be repeated) suppose the Ministry had some Job in view by this Creation of fifteen Peers; but they must be very ill read in Politicks not to consider, if they want one now, it will not be long before they may want another, and then they will have shut the Door, and have no Remedy left.

Supposing the House of Lords, after the Bill is pass'd, should distress the Affairs of the Nation, what can be done in such a Case? for

after that, no fresh Streams can be let in to purge those ill Humours, and bring the Majority to the right Side.

I answer, it must be a very unanimous Opinion that must bring Matters to such a Crisis. And then supposing no such Bill had passed, it may be the Creation of fifty or a hundred at once would not do ; and consequently such a Remedy to set matters Right, may be worse than the Disease : and then so soon as the new created ones are brought in, they may be as resty as the others, and then new Creations will be necessary *ad Infinitum*. Now tho I freely own the Limitation of the Peerage will make it more Honourable, yet it will certainly lessen their Power and Influence ; for I believe it's very obvious few of them improve their Estates ; so that had this A^t passed fifty Years since, the House of Lords would have had less weight. The many Creations of late have lessened the Value, but it has increased the Property, which it's agreed by all will carry the Power with it.

Now it being certain that by the passing this Bill, Property will decrease in the House of Lords, and will as certainly increase in the House of Commons, the true and proper Guardians of the People ; a Prince at the Head of the Commons of *England* in the Nation's Interest, will have nothing to fear from
the

the Peevishness or Obstinacy of a House of Lords; their Weight will every day grow lighter: and if in any Case that shall appear to be for the certain Good of their Country; they should oppose it, which cannot reasonably be supposed; if things are brought to such a Crisis, what has been may be, and they will justly deserve to be used so.

Now since there has been a fix'd Number in the House of Commons, has there been any complaint of the want of the Prerogative (formerly in the Crown) to create new Boroughs to send Burgeses to Parliament? This was as great an Alteration in the Constitution as the Bill now contended against, will be: and yet we hear of no dismal Effects from it; but on the contrary, it was necessary to preserve the People's Liberties, which without such a Restraint must long since have been lost: For on all occasions, when the Commons and Crown disagreed, the Door was left open to the Crown, by this Prerogative of creating new Boroughs, to bring such a Number of Burgeses into the House as to carry the Question.

Now it may be answered, that the Case is different, for the Crown can dissolve the Parliament, and call a new one, in which Case the House of Lords must be always the same

but it's not so in the House of Commons, where there may be a Change. But I will be bold to say, whenever the Crown has dissolv'd a House of Commons in the true Interest of their Country, that much the Majority have been returned again: and if a good Parliament has been dissolved, and a bad one chose, as lately did happen, no Man will plead from that Example, the Benefit of a Dissolution, which at that time had like to have destroyed the Nation, which had run no hazard, had the Majority of the former Members been returned.

Now supposing after the Limitation of the Peerage, we should have a Prince on the Throne as parsimonious of Honour as *Q. Elizabeth*, but with another View: he might in time by the Extinction of Families keep such a Number in petto as to carry any Point. But this must be a Work of Time, and subject to many unforeseen Events; and will put matters but on the same Foot as it would be without a Limitation, with this difference, that one must be a matter of Time, the other at hand, to be put in execution in the very Instant.

It's very much argued that the equal Balance of Power in the three Estates, is the
Foun-

Foundation on which our present happy Constitution subsists, and that whenever any one over-ballances the two others, it must fall ; it must then be a Coercive Power, and swallow up the other two : for so long as they subsist, they will each have a Negative, let which will be superior in Property or Power. And since the Concurrence of all three is necessary, it is not absolutely necessary the Powers should be equal.

To make the Argument subsist against the Bill for limiting the Peerage, because it would destroy the Constitution, by not keeping the due Ballance in the three Estates ; I say, to make this Argument subsist, they must prove all the Creations of Peers to this Day, were absolutely necessary to preserve that Ballance ; which is what I believe the greatest Contenders against the Bill will not allow. When an additional Number under an Arbitrary Ministry were brought in, will they say this was necessary to preserve the Constitution ?

Those Gentlemen that contend so strenuously against the Bill for limiting the Peerage, would do well to satisfy the World what Number of Peers are necessary to keep the Ballance of Power equal, and when are the proper Times to open the Flood-Gates in order to give a
fresh

fresh Resource to the stagnated Pool, as it's said the House of Lords would be without these Refreshments : and they must shew that whatever indefinite Number the Crown has at any time made, was just and necessary for the Safety of the Constitution ; which they must make out, if they will defend it that such a Prerogative is necessary in the Crown for the People's Safety.

I find little has been said as to the Peers of *Scotland* in this matter, more than the Hardship it will be to that numerous Peerage, to make twenty five of them Hereditary in lieu of sixteen Elective ; which is putting a Bar to all the rest from ever sitting in the House of Lords, who otherwise might have their chance to be elected ; and what a disgust must this give to a Nobility so much out of Humour already ?

It happened in the last Reign that the Crown met with an Opposition in the House of Lords, in the creating Duke *Hamilton* Duke of *Brandon*. Indeed he sat in the House as one of the sixteen ; so in that Case I take it for granted he must have relinquished his Elective Seat for the Hereditary ; and tho it did not pass into an Act, yet it was not admitted. Whether the Resolution was so decisive as to limit the Crown, I cannot determine ; yet it was the Sense

Sense of the Majority of the House of Peers, that the bringing the Peers of *Scotland* by *English* Titles into the House ought to be restrained.

Since the Union of the two Nations there is no such thing as the Peerage of *Scotland*; they are now all equal Peers under the Title of *Great-Britain*, and enjoy equally the same Privileges, being only restrained from sitting in the House of Peers; which being a Court of Judicature, sixteen were thought sufficient for that Kingdom, in proportion betwixt the Greatness and Opulency of each.

I do not find in any of the Articles of the Union there is any Restriction as to the making of a *Scotchman* a Peer of the united Kingdoms: Indeed it was reasonably to be supposed that at the Union the Peerage of each Nation was consider'd as to their Bulk and Riches, and therefore so small a Proportion was allotted to *Scotland* as sixteen. As to the Peerage, that could not be increased, for after the Union those that were Peers subsisted under the Restriction of sixteen only to represent them; and there could be no Creation but what must be of *Great-Britain* after that.

In the Limitations of the Crown in his present Majesty's Succession, his Majesty is restrained

strain'd from making a Foreigner a Peer of *England*; but certainly if *Scotchmen* might be made Peers of *England* before the Union, they have a much juster Pretension since we are now one united Kingdom; and it must be incompatible to a Union, unless it admits each Nation to mutual Privileges. Shall a *Welchman*, an *Irishman*, one born in *Jamaica* or *Barbadoes*, any where under the Dominions of the King of *England*, be natural born Subjects, and capable of all Honours, and only *Scotchmen* debar'd? I say it cannot be, unless provided for by a particular Article; nay, even then I say it cannot be a Union, because the Privileges must be mutual to make it compleat.

In what an unhappy Condition must a *Scotchman* be, if this be the case? for by the Union he loses the Reward of Merit he might have expected in being made a Peer of his own Country: nay, it farther incapacitates him from being a Peer of *England*, which he was entitled to before the Union, of which there are too many Instances, to need a Recital.

Now taking it for granted, that the Crown has power to make Peers, which will admit of no dispute, then the Question will be, by what Law or Article in the Union is it that the
Crown

Crown is restrain'd from making a Peer of *Scotland* a Peer of *Great Britain*, that is, of the united Kingdoms? Indeed, I allow he cannot sit as one of the Elected, he must give up that Place ; but may certainly sit in his own Right, as a Peer of *Great Britain*. In this Case the Crown has no occasion to restrain itself to twenty five Hereditary Peers ; it may add nine to those who now sit, since his Majesty may voluntarily limit himself, or extend it to any indefinite Number.

But even granting it the other way, that the Crown cannot make a Man a Peer of *Great Britain* that was a Peer of *Scotland* at the Union ; does it comprehend the whole Nation ? Is every Member of that Nation, tho now by the Union a Member of *Great Britain*, eternally debarred the Privilege of being made a Peer of *Great Britain* ? Surely nothing can be so incompatible to an Union : And what Heart-burnings must it create, to see Men under all Denominations whatsoever, capable of Honours (except Foreigners,) and they only by their Union with us, and being one Nation, lose that Privilege ? Unhappy *Scotland*, if this be thy Condition !

Now supposing from the Opposition made in the Case of Duke *Hamilton*, there may be a dif-

D

ficulty

ficulty of bringing in one that was a Peer of *Scotland* at the Union, to sit as a Peer of *Great Britain*: Yet if it should appear, that by the Union there is no Objection against making a Commoner a Peer, as I think 'tis plain there is not (for there are now no such Kingdoms as *England* or *Scotland* subsisting, but they are included under the Name of *Great Britain*;) then it must certainly lie in the Crown to make any Commoner of *Great Britain* a Peer; and then to satisfy the Peerage of *Scotland* for what they lost by the Union, their eldest Sons may be made Peers; so that the Nobility of *Scotland* may see the Peerage made up to them in their Posterity: for their inheriting afterwards their antient Titles, would not disqualify them, any more than if a Peer of *England* should become by Inheritance a Peer of *Scotland*.

There is one Argument on the side of the Peerage of *Scotland*, before the Union, in relation to the sixteen elective Peers: for making them now twenty five Hereditary, puts it for ever out of their power to serve their Country, and debars them of that Chance they may have one day of sitting in the House of Peers. This must be own'd to be directly contrary to one Article of the Union: But it never was supposed, that
when

when the Nations united for the common Benefit of each other, they did not reserve a Power to themselves to improve that Union, if any thing offer'd that might contribute to that end. And there being now no such Kingdoms subsisting as *England* and *Scotland*, but they being united in one Kingdom of *Great Britain*, their Interests must be the same; and then the Case is only this, Whether the limiting the Peerage of *Great Britain* is for the general Good, or no: for particular Hardships, if there be any, must always give way to what is for the general Good of the whole Community.

I must own that I think, it was not altogether so well to make sixteen Peers Elective: It might have been better by a Rotation, and then every Peer would, in his Turn, have had a Chance to sit in the House of Peers, without any Dependance on a Court Influence in their Election; which, if my Information is not wrong, wholly depends on that. And therefore I must repeat again, that I believe this Restriction of the Prerogative flow'd immediately from the innate Goodness of His Majesty, and his Indulgence to his People; and that if the present Ministry had any share in improving that Benignity in his Majesty, it

will be a shining Character of them to Posterity, and render their Names great and glorious.

Having now taken this Matter of the Peerage in all its Views, I hope I have made it appear to any unprejudic'd Man, that such an Act must be for the Security of the Liberties of the People. Indeed, I cannot hope for any Success by my Arguments from those who will find that this Limitation is a Bar to their Hopes, or to the Party they espouse. But if Men would set aside all private Views, and abstractedly from all Prejudices set this Affair in its true Light, they will find it calculated for preserving to Posterity the Liberty of their Country.

I would not have them frighten'd with Notions of the Alteration of the Constitution : Was not *Magna Charta* obtain'd against the Prerogative ? Were not the Star-Chamber, Court of Wards, High Commission Court, *Habeas Corpus*, Petition of Right, limiting the Number of the Commons, and the Bill of Treasons, by which every Peer of *England* is now to be summon'd, and no Peer can be try'd by a Lord Steward, and a select Number ; are not all these, I say, so many Limitations of the Prerogative, and so many Breaches in the Constitution ? But did they

they not become absolutely necessary in process of Time for the Preservation of the Rights and Liberties of the People of *Great Britain*? What was the occasion of lopping so many Branches of the Prerogative? Was it not from the ill use that had been made of them? And yet we subsisted many Ages without them, until they were found necessary to be restrain'd for the Publick Safety. Was there any Notion at that time, that there would not remain Power enough in the Crown to maintain the just Dignity thereof? No surely, there was not; nor has any Consequence shew'd that those Concessions from the Crown have in any one Instance been the least prejudice to the Nation; on the contrary, they have prov'd the Security of our Liberties.

No body will deny but an ill use has been made of the Prerogative in the Creation of Peers in the late Reign: This was the Reason laid down for the many Restraints formerly in the Prerogative, and certainly subsists now. Had the Parliament then sitting immediately brought to condign Punishment those that counselled that Act, it would have been a Mark set for future Ministers to have avoided such Measures, and in some manner have kept the Prerogative within Bounds. But
it

it was the general Argument of those that espoused that Ministry, What Minister that was attack'd, and had such a Remedy to skreen him, would not do the same? If so, is it not high time for the Nation maturely to consider this Matter? What will the Power of Parliaments be to call a corrupt Minister to account? Will they not have what was done in a former Ministry (with Impunity) to plead? And with what Justice can the Nation then oppose it?

F I N I S.

ERRATA:

Page 9. for *stagnant* read *stagnated*; and for *Spirit* read *Birth*. Pag. 10. line 19. read *Reigns*.
Page 16. line 10. read *most happy*.





